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Unknown to James Meredith (3 October 1962)

Author Unknown

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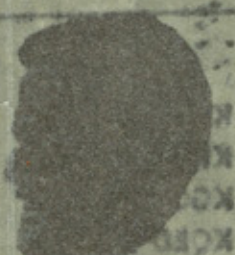
San Francisco Chronicle, October 3, 1962

MR. HOPPE

Our Man Hoppe

Mississippi—The White Man's Burden

VT



Arthur Hoppe

NOW THAT THE PRESIDENT has taken the irreversible step of sending our troops to the field. Consequently, we are abandoning The Fair Play for Mississippi Committee.

As you may recall, the Committee favored allowing Mississippi to secede peacefully. Instead of repeating the mistake we made 100 years ago. But in retrospect, the President's action seems wise. How long could we have tolerated this anti-democratic regime only 100 miles from Key West?

Moreover, the more I see of White Mississippians screaming and rioting and stoning their fellow Black Mississippians the more I have to agree with the President's stand.

Mississippi simply isn't ready for self government yet.

TRUE. It takes a long and costly struggle. The nation was filled with hatred for us and our ways. But the challenges are no worse than we must surmount in South Vietnam. Go out much more. And I have a scientific faith that we will eventually emerge victorious. If we have to burn up half of Mississippi to do it.

And when our hour of victory comes, it must, let us not be vengeful. Let us not, as some have suggested, give Mississippi to the Black Muslims. No, let us be charitable. Let us strive to teach Mississippi our ways. Who knows? Some day it might actually become an asset in the Cold War.

Naturally, such a reconstruction program will involve conflict. We will have to burn the old regime down to its foundations. Just as we did in Germany (and Japan). Naturally, we will have to provide occupation troops for years to come. And naturally we will face the problem of integration, gold or silver or copper or iron or Mississippi plan or whatever.

WE HAVE our Peace Corps, who will teach the natives to build roads and schools. We have our Point Four Program, which has worked so well in other backward areas.

Most important of all, we must create the British Colonial Office and attempt to train a new cadre of native public officials. We must instill in them the democratic concept that each citizen is entitled to a vote and an equal opportunity for public education.

It is, I admit, an awesome challenge. But if we could do it in Germany and Japan, I say, we can do it in Mississippi.

True, it has been estimated this gigantic undertaking will require 80 years and \$462,472,025.07. A staggering sum. But we must have faith. The golden day will inevitably come when the Stars and Stripes are lowered for the last time over the Capitol at Jackson. And Mississippi will at last embark into the future, a free and independent nation, no longer a burden on either our purse or our conscience.

It is a vision like this that makes the struggle worthwhile.